collection efficiency, reduction in theft and improvement in consumer services etc.

(ii) Electricity Act, 2003 has been enacted to bring competition in the sector. It also provides legal framework for making theft of electricity as cognizable offence.

(iii) The National Electricity Policy was notified by the Ministry in 2005 after consultations with various stakeholders. It aims at laying guidelines for accelerated development of the power sector, providing supply of electricity to all areas and protecting interests of consumers and other stakeholders.

(iv) With an objective to propagate adoption of best practices in the distribution sector, Ministry has organized National level workshops on best practices in distribution sector.

(v) Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Vidyutikaran Yojana (RGGVY) is under implementation since April, 2005 to provide rural electricity infrastructure, which includes—

1. Rural Electricity Distribution Backbone (REDB) with at least one 33/11KV (or 66/11KV) sub-station in each block.
2. Village Electrification Infrastructure (VEI) with at least one distribution transformer in each village/habitation.
3. Decentralized Distributed Generation (DDG) Systems where grid supply is not feasible or cost-effective.

This infrastructure so created will strengthen the distribution system and will reduce technical losses. Besides this the scheme provides for mandatory installation of franchisee system for rural distribution management to ensure revenue sustainability. This will reduce AT & C losses. It has already started showing the results.

Changes in power policy

†82. SHRI MOTILAL VORA:
SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(a) whether Government propose to bring changes in power policy to promote the Hydro power production in hilly States such as Himachal Pradesh and Arunachal Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when the same is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SHINDE): (a) to (c) Government of India has announced the National Electricity Policy in February, 2005, which, among others, lays emphasis on harnessing hydro potential speedily to facilitate economic development of States, particularly that of North-Eastern States, Sikkim, Uttaranchal, Himachal Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir.

Keeping in view the unique problems associated with hydro projects, a suggestion is under examination that the exemption from tariff based bidding available to the public sector under Clause 5.1 of Tariff Policy till January, 2011 may also be extended to the private sector.

Setting up of new power transmission projects

†83. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 14 large projects have been formulated in transmission sector of the country thereby making transmission possible across the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the names of these projects along with the quantum of power transmission and destination targeted under each of the projects; and

(d) the target set for completion of the work on these projects?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SHINDE): (a) There exists at present a 'National Grid' which allows wheeling of power across the country. 14 new projects are planned to be developed through competitive bidding, which will form part of the 'National Grid'.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.